



EPA ADDS RARITAN BAY SITE TO NATION'S SUPERFUND LIST

Community Update

November 2009

THE U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY HAS PLACED THE RARITAN BAY SLAG SITE ON THE SUPERFUND NATIONAL PRIORITIES LIST.

QUESTIONS? Please Contact

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Visit EPA's Web site at:

www.epa.gov/region02/superfund

DEFINITIONS:

Removal Program - responsible for a short-term action taken to address a release or threat of release of a hazardous substance.

Remedial Program - responsible for an in-depth study to determine the nature and extent of contamination and what actions need to be taken.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has placed the Raritan Bay Slag site (site) located in Sayreville and Old Bridge Township, N.J., on the Superfund National Priorities List (NPL). The listing enables EPA to continue a rigorous and extensive investigation into the extent of the contamination and the most effective way to deal with it. The site was proposed for NPL listing on April 8, 2009, at which point a 60-day public comment period began. Another 60-day extension to the comment period was granted and EPA accepted comments on the proposed listing until August 17, 2009.

SAMPLING EFFORTS

EPA's Removal Program collected samples at the site in September 2008. Analytical results indicated that significantly elevated levels of lead and other heavy metals were present in the soils, beach sand, and sediment in around both the seawall in Laurence Harbor and the western jetty at the Cheesecake Creek Inlet. Lead was also identified on the first beach between the western end of the seawall and the first jetty in Old Bridge Waterfront Park. Based on the results of the sampling, the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services in conjunction with the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, determined that portions of the Raritan Bay Slag site posed a Public Health Hazard and recommended restricted access to the seawall and a beach in Laurence Harbor. In response to that recommendation, EPA's Removal Program erected public warning signs in both English and Spanish in the areas of concern, warning of the threat posed by elevated levels of lead. Additionally, security fencing was installed to restrict access.

During the month of July 2009, EPA and its contractor completed an additional soil and sediment sampling event. The sampling involved the collection of 1,167 samples from 357 individual locations along the Old Bridge and Sayreville waterfront. At each sampling location, the objective was to obtain samples from three discrete depths: 0-6", 0-12" and 12-24". The results identified that elevated concentrations of lead exist immediately adjacent to the Old Bridge seawall and west of the Cheesecake Creek jetty. Overall, the concentrations of heavy metals decrease with depth. The results are being evaluated by the EPA Remedial Program and

EPA risk assessors.

To date, EPA's efforts at the Raritan Bay Slag site, including the sampling as well as the fencing and signage, has been done under EPA's Removal Program. The Removal Program handles short-term actions to address a release or threat of release of a hazardous substance that may present an imminent and/or substantial danger to the public health or welfare, or the environment. If you have any questions about the work of the Removal Program, you may contact either Pat Seppi, EPA's Community Involvement Coordinator or Andrew Confortini, EPA's On-Scene Coordinator. Their contact information is available in the shaded box on the front of this update.

Now that the Raritan Bay Slag site has been placed on the NPL, most of the work done at the site will transition over to EPA's Remedial Program. The Remedial Program will perform an in-depth study designed to gather data needed to determine the nature and extent of contamination at a Superfund site; establish site cleanup criteria; identify preliminary alternatives for remedial action, and support technical and cost analyses of alternatives in an effort to determine what actions, if any, need to be taken to clean up the site. For additional information about the Remedial Program, please contact either Pat Seppi (information on front of update) or EPA's Project Manager, Tanya Mitchell, whose contact information is available in the shaded box on the front of this update.

HISTORY/BACKGROUND INFO:

The Raritan Bay Slag site is located in the Laurence Harbor section of Old Bridge and in Sayreville along the Raritan Bay. The overall site spans approximately 1.3 miles in length and consists of the waterfront area between Margaret's Creek and the area just beyond the western jetty at the Cheesequake Creek Inlet. The portion of the site that is in Laurence Harbor is part of what is now called Old Bridge Waterfront Park. Lead slag, reportedly in the form of blast furnace pot bottoms, was deposited along the beachfront in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The other portion of the site that is in Sayreville is located on, and adjacent to, the western jetty at the Cheesequake Creek Inlet. The slag on the jetty is similar in appearance to that which is present on the seawall. Crushed battery casings are also evident on the jetty. The Raritan Bay Slag site is part of a larger effort which includes the area around Margaret's Creek, an area in which the NJDEP discovered lead-contaminated material.

US EPA Region 2 has designated an Ombudsman as a point-of-contact for community concerns and questions about the federal Superfund program in New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands. To support this effort, the Agency has established a 24-hour, toll-free number that the public can call to request information, express their concerns or register complaints about Superfund. The ombudsman for EPA's Region 2 office is:

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